

*"Learning is a treasure
that will follow its
owner everywhere"*

Chinese Proverb



It's our first newsletter of 2012 and I want to start with a big thanks for the amazing support you gave ACEF last year. I look forward to working with you all this year to make even more of an impact - a huge challenge, given what we have achieved in a short space of time.

It is hard to believe that this time last year we were just formalising the Charity. Looking back at new friendships made, achievements accomplished and memories created - it seems impossible that only a year has passed.



"Kenya has given me a real insight into life and into my teaching. The children appreciate and respect what they have and I want to try to bring that across to our students"

Sarah, Teacher and Volunteer

2011 ACEF Annual

So what stories do the pages of our 2011 Annual tell about the incredible support you all gave to ACEF and Brainhouse Academy?

Aggrey, our Headteacher at Brainhouse Academy summed it up 'just stop and look what you have done to our school'. He is right - we have made a huge difference in Kenya. We have also changed many lives here in the UK as well.

Here are some of the changes at Brainhouse Academy:

Physical environment

- Vegetable garden or "shamba" established to supplement the basic diets of the children
- Solar panels donated and installed providing sustainable electricity to Brainhouse Academy - thanks to Mitsubishi Electric and our local experts from Television Sales and Rental Ltd
- Water pump and 10,000L water tank bought and installed, replacing the need to haul water with a bucket
- New classrooms painted and decorated.

Health and Wellbeing

- Fed our students a meal a day
- Plastic surgery completed for burn-victim Maggie enabling her to move her head freely
- Hearing aids provided to Emma and a small operation allowing her to hear and speak
- Special shoes provided to Anna to correct her walking stance
- A support scheme established with the "Special Parents" to educate and support students through issues such as relationships, sex, HIV and bullying
- Our 'Campaign for Dignity' supplied sanitary towels to 300 girls, thanks to all the donations in the UK
- Provided clothing, shoes and drinking mugs for hot drinks
- A celebration event held for the community, sharing the successes of the school.

Educational Opportunities

- Teachers exchanged ideas and techniques on effective teaching with minimal resources
- Art and craft materials provided thanks to the generosity of so many, but in particular Queen Victoria Primary School, and arts skills introduced to the curriculum
- Sport enhanced for the students and staff including football, volleyball and netball
- Donated sports equipment from tennis balls to skipping ropes, football nets to bats
- Music collaboration started with MCA and equipment provided to support the music teacher.



"What an excellent trip - it was great fun, a real challenge and at times quite emotional. I'm so pleased that the improvements we made around the school will make a real difference to everyone there."

Andy



"The children miss you so very much when you leave - it is so quiet - they miss you all very much."

Madame Mary

Many of these changes were made thanks to **two volunteer trips** both making substantial changes within Brainhouse Academy whilst also enriching the lives of the volunteers too!

In 2011 we donated **£20,716** to Brainhouse and raised funds through a great array of activities:

- 80 people took part in a sponsored Bike Ride which raised nearly £4,000
- Supporters ran an Open Garden day to raise funds and awareness
- Celebrated our year with a fantastic Birthday party at Akamba - thank you those who joined us
- Started a raffle to raise substantial funds for land and other developments at the school
- Three volunteers rode over 200 miles from Newcastle to raise over a £1,000
- Established links with Manchester Communications Academy, Queen Victoria Primary School, West Heath Primary School, Birmingham City Council, QCDA, Seeds for Africa, Solihull Council, Mitsubishi Electric, Imagination Street, Standards Testing Agency, Windsor High School, Guide Groups, Brownie Groups, Trefoil Guild, Church Groups

..... and all of this and more was achieved as volunteers - almost unbelievable.



"Just look around - you can see the difference you have made in ten days!"

Aggrey - Principal of Brainhouse

How can you get involved in 2012?

Purchase a raffle ticket to win the most amazing prize - a trip for two to Kenya including a safari!

Tickets are just £5. We need everyone to sell a book to their friends as it is a key opportunity to raise money before Easter - Get in touch now for tickets. Or if it's one last ticket just for you donate on JustGiving and we will enter a lucky ticket for you.

Take part in a trip to Kenya

April will see a team of teachers from Manchester Communications Academy travel to Brainhouse and in October there will be a trip open to volunteers. If you would like to impact the lives of the children and their community let us know by the end of May to discuss joining the team on this transformational visit.

Take part in the 2012 Bike Ride around Warwickshire.

Cycle routes suitable for the whole family - a guaranteed fun day out on Saturday 16th June.

Contact Alison.Halford@gmail.com to register your interest.

Come along to the ACEF Summer BBQ

Akamba will host a special summer party. Come for a celebration to mark our achievements and have fun!

Saturday 7th July

Funding for ACEF's next steps

We are putting together a proposal to gain substantial funding to enable a research programme into what can make the greatest difference for our students when they leave Brainhouse. We would like your thoughts and ideas so contact us or come along to our development and planning meeting at Akamba - 7.30pm Tues 1st May.

Dates for your diary

- **8th April** - The raffle ticket draw. Don't forget to get your tickets stubs and cash to us at least a week in advance of the draw for a chance to win this fabulous holiday for two.
- **1st May** - Join us at the development meeting to help hone our ideas for this important bid
- **16th June** - Take part in the sponsored ACEF Bike Ride
- **7th July** - Party at the Summer BBQ
- **October** - volunteer trip to Brainhouse Academy

Finally, I just want to say that when I go on JustGiving I am blown away by the many and various people who have taken time to donate money to our kids. Words can be so cheap, but I honestly do not know how to express our thanks, but to say that the kids, the teachers and ourselves are so very grateful for your support which is making such a huge difference to their lives.

We look forward to seeing you at our fundraising events this year or hearing your ideas about how we can build our charity together.

With Many Thanks

Liz, Kel and Julie



"We are very thankful for what you did for us during sports day. Thanks a lot - may you continue with the spirit."



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